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FACT AND FICTION IN THE FRANKLIN W. DIXON

Ted Scott Series

By David K. Vaughan



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EDEN SERIES

Publisher: Street & Smith, 238 William St., New York, N. Y. Issues: 173. Dates: January 5, 1901 to June 1906 (dates are approximate). Schedule: Weekly, bi-weekly and later monthly. Size 7 1/8 x 5". Pages: 300 to 500. Price: 10c. Illustrations: pictorial colored cover of standard design. Contents: Popular romances of the day. Most of Mrs. Southworth's stories were published as well as Miss M. E. Braddon's. The series was later reissued as the Southworth Library.

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Ted Scott Series

By David K. Vaughan

The Ted Scott series consisted of twenty volumes published from 1927 to 1943. The first four volumes appeared in 1927. Then three volumes were published in each of the next three years—1928, 1929, 1930. From 1931 through 1935 one new volume appeared every year. Then no new volumes were published until 1941, when one new title appeared. The last title appeared two years later, in 1943. In the first four years of the series, 13 titles appeared. In the last 13 years of the series 7 titles appeared. Walter Rodgers supplied the cover art for the first 14 books; J. Clemens Gretter supplied the art for the next four titles; and I. B. Hazelton was credited for the art work on the last two titles. Rodgers' covers were, as usual, wonderfully gaudy and totally unrealistic; Gretter's were colorful and dramatic; Hazelton's were nicely stylized.

In reading the twenty volumes of the Ted Scott series, I have discerned the hand of three separate authors at work. I have called the three authors P (the author of the prototype, or first, volume); A (ghost author number one); and B (ghost author number two). According to my reading, author P wrote only the first volume of the series ("Over the Ocean to Paris," a thinly-disguised version of the Lindbergh story), which was intended to serve as a model for later volumes and which established the subplot involving that villainous threesome, Gregory and Duckworth Gale and their dad, Brewster. The next three 1927 volumes were assigned to author A, who attempted to develop story lines that balanced aerial achievements with the Gale family's devious doings. Author B then appeared and produced the first two titles of 1928. Author A supplied the last 1928 volume and the first two 1929 volumes. Author B supplied the third 1929 volume. Then, in what I see as the "great write-off," authors A and B competed with each other for the privilege of writing the remaining volumes in the series; author B's book (the winning entry) was the first 1930 title; author A's book (the losing entry) was the second 1930 title. Author B then wrote every remaining volume in the series, beginning with the third 1930 volume and continuing at the rate of one book a year through 1935, concluding with the last two volumes of 1941 and 1943.

Schematically, the title list looks something like this: Author P: #1—

Over the Ocean to Paris (1927) (prototype)

Author A:

#2—Rescued in the Clouds (1927)

#3—Over the Rockies with the Air Mail (1927)

#44—First Stop Honolulu (1927)

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Author B:

#5—The Search for the Lost Flyers (1928)

#6—South of the Rio Grande (1928)

Author A:

#7—Across the Pacific (1928)

#8—The Lone Eagle of the Border (1929)

#9—Flying Against Time (1929)

Author B:

#10—Over the Jungle Trails (1929)

#11—Lost at the South Pole (1930)

Author A:

#12—Through the Air to Alaska (1930)

Author B:

#13—Flying to the Rescue (1930)

#14—Danger Trails of the Sky (1931)

#15—Following the Sun Shadow (1932)

#16—Battling the Wind (1933)

#17—Brushing the Mountain Top (1934)

#18—Castaways of the Stratosphere (1935)

#19—Hunting the Sky Spies (1941)

#30—The Pursuit Patrol (1943)

#21—Under Sealed Orders (1944) ?

The last title listed—"Under Sealed Orders"—was not published, but it was given as the next book to be published at the end of "The Pursuit Patrol," the last published volume in the series.

Before discussing the methods by which I determined authorship of the individual volumes, I want to review what seems to me to have been the original intent of the Stratemeyer Syndicate in developing the basic plot pattern for the Ted Scott books. It is necessary to consider the initial intent in the conception of the Ted Scott books, for that plan seems to me to have presented the series with its greatest asset and greatest stumbling block—the combination of credible aerial achievements and subplots involving intrigue and criminal misdeeds. Until the series author B resolved that dilemma, the series books displayed uneven plots and inconsistent quality.

The original intent of the Syndicate seems to have been to highlight the aerial activities and achievements of aviators of the day, to tinker slightly with the true stories of actual aerial accomplishments, and to adapt aviators to the series hero profile as illustrated in series book types of the Stratemeyer model. This strategy meant that not only would the pilot have to be an exceptional aviator, the pilot would also have to uphold the cause of right against selfish and malicious interests. While this approach was feasible, it presented certain difficulties, for the authors were required to develop believable subplots at the same time that they were supposed to discuss the finer points of aviation lore and practice. Both elements required skilled writing technique and some knowledge of flying activities. The Syndicate thought it knew how to help its authors deal successfully with both aspects, but the approach of the Syndicate did not work as well as it had hoped. Only after author B decided to modify the Syndicate's plot plan did the series begin to fly.

That the Syndicate intended the series to dramatize actual aerial events is evidenced by the prefatory dedication that was reprinted in every volume of the series. The dedication tells us something about the intent of the Syndicate, for it mentions a number of aerial pioneers by name, including the

Wright brothers, Bleriot, Alcock, Byrd, Lindbergh, Chamberlin, Maitland, Heggenger, "and a host of other gallant airmen of the Past and Present who, by their daring exploits, have made aviation the wonderful achievement it is to-day." The interesting thing about this list is that with the exception of Bleriot and the Wright brothers, the remaining pilots named all achieved their aerial successes in 1927, the year in which the first Ted Scott books appeared. In 1928 four more names were added—Koehl and Fitzmaurice, who flew from Europe to America, and Wilkins and Eielson, who flew in the North polar region; no more names were added after that time—the Syndicate probably realized their dedication might grow large enough to constitute a book in itself. The purpose of the dedication seems to have been to acknowledge the fact that the life stories of these individuals were being borrowed wholesale for commercial purposes.

The first volume in the series, "Over the Ocean to Paris" (1927), was, in the description of the aerial activities, almost an exact copy of the life of Charles Lindbergh. It repeated numerous aspects of his life and flying experiences, including his early flying training, his air mail flights, his record-breaking coast-to-coast flight just prior to his flight across the Atlantic, and of course the flight to Paris. The book contains a number of relatively technical—and accurate—discussions of aircraft features and flying maneuvers, all introduced to give the story the flavor of real aviation activities (see, for instance, pp. 42-3, 52-3, 98-9, 166-7, 185). But of the record-breaking flight itself relatively little is said, other than that it was long and took a determined effort.

Much of the book is spent describing the underhanded attempts of the Gale clan to discredit Ted Scott's foster parents, Eben and Charity Browning. And although the Syndicate had developed an intricate subplot involving the Gale family and Ted's attempts to discover his past that was designed to take all four of the 1927 volumes to unravel there was one serious flaw in the subplot setup, and that was that the subplot was not related to flying activity. Whenever Ted Scott took time to give Greg and Duck Gale their well deserved comeuppance, he had to temporarily abandon his flying environment. The subplot scheme had absolutely nothing to do with aviation activity. Author A's unwillingness to resolve this inconsistency—or even to see it as an inconsistency—led to the production of several early books in the series that contained episodic plots. Author B, as we will soon see, addressed the problem successfully.

It seems likely that author P, the prototype author, might well have been Edward Stratemeyer himself. Stratemeyer had written at least one aviation-related book earlier. "The Aircraft Boys of Lakeport," (1912), a book which shares a similar plot construction pattern with the first Ted Scott book. Stratemeyer had also directed Leslie McFarlane to incorporate a pair of red-headed antagonists into the first volume of the Hardy Boys books about the same time that "Over the Ocean to Paris" appeared; the two Gale boys, Greg and Duck, are also redheads: "both had red hair, big teeth, coarse features and were gaudily attired. Not only were they physically alike, but their resemblance extended to their moral qualities, or perhaps their lack of them" (22). Like other Stratemeyer villains, they have more money than is good for them.

It is evident that the first four 1927 books were designed to be produced as a package, for each book mentions the title and gives a preview of the events of the book that is to follow. After 1927, series volumes fail to mention subsequent volume titles until the 1930 volume, "Flying to the Rescue."

It is clear that the initial four books were intended to be "breeders," as Leslie McFarlane calls them, a series of books intended to generate interest in and potential buyers for subsequent volumes in the series. It also seems evident—to me, at least—that author P did not write the succeeding three volumes, for they are differently structured. Author A, the first ghost writer in the series, did not appear to know very much about aircraft or aircraft operations. Any mention of aircraft activities or of technical subjects in general is limited and when a relatively technical discussion does occur, it appears to have been pre-written and inserted in an appropriate spot. Although author B also probably did not know a great deal about flying, he appeared to have been more excited about the promise aviation held for the average citizen.

"Rescued in the Clouds" was the second of the 1927 volumes, and the first of a set of three that author A produced that year. The primary flying activity that was featured in that book was an account of Ted Scott's aerial efforts to help people affected by floods caused by the rain-swollen Mississippi River. The lack of a specific aviation achievement (and perhaps a lack of time) appears to have hindered author A in the construction of the story, for there was no climatic aerial event to bring the book to an exciting close. Instead, the author had to rely on a miscellaneous collection of episodes, the most memorable and unrealistic of which was the aerial rescue of a friend from a burning aircraft in flight. The book also featured one of the many snake episodes that were to appear frequently in the series; in this case Ted Scott dispatches a snake that crawls out from a bag in the airplane.

Most of the action in the book, however, centers on confrontations between Ted Scott and the Gales. These confrontations have to do with the fact that the Gales bilked Eben and Charity Browning out of some valuable property, property which is eventually returned to them. But in the meantime, run-ins with the Gales keep Ted Scott away from the activity that he—and his readers—would rather be involved in—flying. The marked division between flying activity and the misdeeds of the Gale family causes severe breaks in the flow of the action in this book and in the two which follow.

The next 1927 volume, "Over the Rockies with the Air Mail," also written by author A, is stamped with his trademark—another fragmented plot. The basic story line, in which Ted Scott helps one of his buddies fly the air mail across the Rocky Mountains, is interrupted by the machinations of the Gale boys and by a new villain, Sam Felwig, who tries unsuccessfully to put Ted Scott out of commission. Other than introducing the mandatory severe storm required in every Ted Scott book, author A does not include many of the more realistic accidents which typically made the lives of air mail pilots interesting and dangerous. As a matter of historical record, air mail contracts were let in the summer of 1927, thus inaugurating a truly significant chapter in early American aviation. Author A does not provide a realistic portrayal of the adventures of the air mail pilots, focusing instead on the by now predictably belligerent actions of the Gale boys. In this volume, the misdeeds of Brewster Gale are discovered, and the Brownings have their property returned to them.

The next volume, "First Stop Honolulu," is the most successful of the 1927 volumes written by author A, primarily because it focuses on a specific and limited aerial event, an air race from California to Hawaii. The race that the book uses as its model is the Dole Race, which occurred in the last part of August, 1927. Of the nine aircraft entered in the race, three crashed on takeoff, three were lost at sea, and one was disqualified before it took

off for not having an adequate fuel reserve. Only two of the nine airplanes actually reached Hawaii; the winner was the Woolaroc, flown by Art Goebel and Lt. W. C. Davis, of the U. S. Navy. Although the basic facts of the Dole race could have led to an exciting story, author A preferred instead to dwell on the underhanded dealings of the Gale family, on Ted Scott's attempts to determine the identity of his parents, and on Ted's efforts to clear his father's name of allegations of wrong-doing. The large number of planes and flyers competing for the Dole race prize money should have provided the perfect scenario for an exciting story. It appears as if Stratemeyer initially intended to base the story on the June, 1927, flight to Hawaii of the two army pilots, Maitland and Heggenberger (because their names are included in the dedication page), but changed his mind after the Dole race generated greater national interest.

The first 1928 volume, "The Search for the Lost Flyers," is the first contribution by author B, and the difference is immediately apparent. Whereas author A did not attempt to reconcile the two totally different parts of the basic story line—the aviation activity and the antics of the Gale family, author B seemed to see immediately that the answer to that problem was to downplay the Gale family aspect, and introduce suspicious characters in the course of whatever aerial adventures Ted Scott was involved in at the time. Author B did not immediately ignore the Gale family, for he was undoubtedly under instructions (probably in the plot summary provided by the Syndicate) to include the Gales in the action. But over a period of time author B successfully managed to phase the Gales out of the stories, presumably with the Stratemeyer blessing.

"The Search for the Lost Flyers" features a number of trademarks of author B, including a little more enthusiastic use of technical discussions, a livelier style, and—best of all—a unified plot. In addition, author B included an occasional enthusiastic outburst in praise of the promise of aviation. Here, for instance, is Ted Scott's prediction of the future of aviation for the average person:

"Why, the time will come," he went on, his enthusiasm kindling, "when the skies will be fairly black with machines, the same as the roads now are filled with automobiles on Sunday or a holiday. It will be thought a disgrace, or at least a sign of poverty, not to own an airplane. And there will be enough fool-proof devices invented to make it as safe to drive an airplane as it is now to drive a car. And mind, I'm not talking of a hundred years from now, I'll give ten years, twenty at most, before this becomes a reality." (45)

In "The Search for the Lost Flyers" Ted Scott and his friend and benefactor Walter Hapworth fly to Cuba, Haiti, and the West Indies in search of Ted's other friend and benefactor, the Frenchman Paul Monet. The missing persons are found, along with a veritable fortune in pearls, but not without an encounter with snakes and devilfish. The principal antagonists in the story are the Gale boys, but their actions are held to a minimum. Although this is the first effort by author B, and although it is clear that he is constrained by the dictates of the Syndicate plot summary and the nature of the previous volumes, he nevertheless exhibits a command over his material that is not evident in author A.

In "South of the Rio Grande," the second 1928 volume and the second by author B, the mastery over the plot elements is increasingly evident. In this book, Ted Scott and Walter Hapworth fly to Mexico to survey possible oil well sites; while there, they become involved in local politics as they aid a

local rebel chief in his struggle to regain favor. In this book Ted makes friends with a local character named Bapo, who flies copilot for him for a while as they attempt to avoid the trouble-making activities of a rebel named Ramirez. Here we can see author B bringing in new characters to add the necessary degree of mystery and intrigue, instead of relying on the comic blunders of the Gale brothers. The book itself was probably suggested by Charles Lindbergh's visit to Mexico City during the winter of 1927-1928. Lindbergh, of course, did not become involved with rebel chiefs; he became involved instead with a daughter of the American ambassador by the name of Anne Morrow. But none of that romantic activity was appropriate for inclusion in a Ted Scott book.

The third 1928 volume, "Across the Pacific," is perhaps author A's least successful effort. The story of the first successful flight from California to Australia should have been a sure-fire success. Instead, in the hands of author A, it becomes a collection of all that can go wrong in an ineffectively-told Ted Scott tale. It becomes almost a parody of the Ted Scott formula story. The story opens with Ted and Walter Hapworth returning from their Mexican adventure. Just as they reach American terrain, they encounter the (mandatory) violent storm that temporarily disables the aircraft. Ted tries to land the airplane in a field, but as he begins to land, a train suddenly appears immediately in front of the airplane. What happens next illustrates author A's casual attitude towards realism in his story-telling:

The locomotive of the freight appeared on the further track not more than thirty feet away and directly in the path of the plane.

"Jump, Walter!" shouted Ted.

Hapworth obeyed instantly and came to the ground ten feet below without injury.

"Jump yourself!" he yelled back, as he scrambled to his feet.

Ted did not answer.

His shout to Hapworth had been prompted by two reasons. The first was to save his comrade's life, even though he himself should die at his post. The second was to lighten the plane.

He tugged desperately at the joy stick and this time the plane, relieved of Hapworth's weight, responded. Slowly it mounted, mounted.

Ted's heart was in his mouth.

Would he clear the freight?

And while his eyes are seeking an answer to this question, it may be well, for the benefit of those who have not read the preceding volumes of this series, to tell who Ted was and what had been his adventures up to the time this story opens. (11-2)

If it is possible for Walter Hapworth to survive a ten foot drop to the ground from a speeding plane and then continue to hold a conversation with the pilot, then it may also be possible for an author to suspend a plane in front of a freight train for seven pages while he summarizes previous events. But even the most naive of readers may have found this sequence of events a bit difficult to believe. Author A gives the flight to Australia an equally unlikely rendition.

Sir Charles Kingsford-Smith and Charles T. P. Ulm flew a tri-motored Fokker airplane, the Southern Cross, from California to Australia during the last week of May and first week of June of 1928. Their aerial voyage was truly significant because it was the first successful crossing of that large body of water. Kingsford-Smith and Ulm were assisted in their flight by James Warner, radio operator, and Harry Lyon, navigator; they made re-

fueling stops at Hawaii and the Fiji Islands. The magnitude of the achievement of their flight can be measured by the fact that the first successful flight from California, the Maitland-Heggenberger flight, had been completed only a year earlier and by the fact that only two out of nine entries in the Dole Race ten months previous had safely made their way to Hawaii. However, author A devotes only the final fifty pages to the flight and devotes most of the first part of the book to another series of relatively uninteresting air mail flights. In the interest of economy, author A arranges for Ted and fellow pilot Ed Allenby to fly nonstop from California to Australia in an airplane named the Southern Queen. They are commissioned to fly the airplane to Australia by a Mr. Rockridge, who has to arrive by a certain day or his Australian girl friend won't consent to marry him. To top off the episode, Rockridge goes temporarily mad during the last portion of the flight, and Ted and Ed are barely able to restrain Rockridge before he crashes the plane into the ocean. As usual, author A focuses upon the misdeeds of the Gale boys, though he also brings Sam Felwig and another villain with the wonderful name of Check Dorp in to share in the devious dealings.

The first 1929 volume was "The Lone Eagle of the Border," also written by author A. This book begins with Ted's attempt to set an endurance record; endurance records were being broken at that time on an almost daily basis. Once Ted succeeds in this endeavor, he proceeds to the Detroit area, where he assists Federal authorities in the efforts to uncover a diamond-smuggling ring. Once again, author A gives the Gales an appearance in the book before he shifts the burden of villainy to a character named Emil Kost, who is involved in the smuggling operation.

The second 1929 volume is another uninspired effort by author A, entitled "Flying Against Time." The central aerial achievement of the book is Ted Scott's record-breaking coast-to-coast flight, but once again author A settles for a mechanical approach to what could have been an exciting story. Ted Scott is hindered in his efforts to begin the race by the malicious actions of the Gale boys, assisted by some of their cronies. Once again, author A utilizes the old snake-in-the-cockpit trick, almost exactly as he did in the second volume in the series, "Rescued in the Clouds." As a matter of interest, snakes appear in almost half of the books in the series; encounters with wild animals seem to have been a required ingredient in the Stratemeyer formula—both authors A and B included at least one such episode in nearly every book in the series. Other required plot elements apparently included violent wind or rain storms, near misses with other aircraft, and fires, either in the air or on the ground.

Author B concludes the 1927 volumes with "Over the Jungle Trails." This volume, to my mind at least, marks author B's transition from apprentice to master, for "Over the Jungle Trails" contains the most tightly-knit, best-unified plot of any book thus far. In this book Ted Scott flies into the wilds of Brazil to find a missing crew of scientists. The action of the story is channeled almost exclusively into the preparations for the trip and into a good, detailed account of the adventures that befall Ted Scott and his crew while they are in Brazil. This book demonstrates characteristics that will be seen in every future book of author B, including exotic locations, interesting and believable characters, and realistic description. It is in this book also that author B effectively says farewell to the Gale boys, for they appear in his books no more.

The first two volumes of 1930 appear to me to be the result of a "write-off" conducted by the Syndicate to determine which writer would be given

the honor of sole responsibility for the production of the remaining Ted Scott volumes.

There are a number of similarities in both books, each written by a different author, that lead me to this conclusion. In the first place, they both describe adventures in cold climates. "Lost at the South Pole," the first volume listed for 1930, was written by author B and featured a fictionalized version of the Byrd Expedition to the South Pole. "Through the Air to Alaska," the second 1930 volume, appears to be the production of author A, for it features the fragmented plot typical of author A's approach. The story line describes Ted Scott's efforts to help a friend recover some gold of which he had been unlawfully deprived; Ted Scott's travels eventually take him to Alaska. Although both books feature locales that are far apart, they both describe activities in cold climates. Another similarity is the fact that both books contain episodes in which Ted Scott and his companions are almost lost over the edge of a cliff.

A third striking similarity is the duplicate use of an airplane preflight procedure as the technical discussion included in each book. Here, for instance, is the discussion as given in "Lost at the South Pole":

He (Ted Scott) examined all the open control wires, all the wires and pulleys that could be seen through apertures, and all the hinges on the control surfaces. He inspected the landing gear, wheels, fittings, and shock absorbers.

He gave the engine a warming-up test, during which he observed the functioning of all the engine instruments. He took note of the engine exhaust manifolds and exhaust pipe extensions. He examined the carburetor and fuel feed lines. All the parts of the fuselage passed under the glance of his keen eyes.

He tested the main plane external bracing, including fittings and struts, external wires, cables, turnbuckles, the fabric and covering. He made sure that the cowlings were properly secured and safetied. He looked into the condition of the propellers. He saw to the cooling system and connections. He ascertained that the tanks were adequately filled with gasoline.

And this is the version that appeared in "Through the Air to Alaska":

He examined the main plane external bracing, including fittings and struts, external wire cables, turnbuckles, and fabric. He tested the exhaust manifolds and gave the engine a warming up to see that everything connected with it was functioning properly. He inspected the open control wires, the pulleys, and the hinges on control surfaces. He paid close attention to the landing gear, wheels, fittings, and shock absorbers. He insured that the cowlings were secured and safetied. He saw that the propeller alignment was correct. The carburetors and fuel-feed lines came in for their full share of attention.

While the explanation could be given that the same author decided to use the preflight description twice in a row because he liked it so much, the fact that that kind of incident does not happen elsewhere in the series. Although some technical discussions and flying episodes are repeated (such as the snake in the airplane and the pre-flight accounts), they are usually not repeated in books published in the same year. The appearance of the nearly identical preflight episodes in books by both authors suggests that neither one was a pilot—or even had much familiarity with aircraft—and provides additional support for the assumption that technical discussions were supplied by the Syndicate along with plot summary sheets. It also appears that the syndi-

cate usually supplied only one or two technical discussions per book. While author A utilized only those technical descriptions provided by the Syndicate, author B often supplemented them with additional technical or theoretical descriptions, such as predictions about future aircraft developments.

A final comparison between the first two 1930 books shows that author A again incorporates the nefarious doings of the Gale boys into his plot, while author B ignores them. Further evidence that these two volumes were the result of a "write-off" competition is the fact that author A appears to have lost the competition, for he wrote no more volumes in the series. With the appearance of "Flying to the Rescue," the last of the three 1930 volumes, author B settles comfortably into his chair as Official Series Author, and at this point the quality of the series books which follow is uniformly high. With the Gale boys out of the picture, Ted Scott truly "takes off," as author B writes the remaining eight volumes. It is interesting to note that once again, beginning with "Flying to the Rescue," each volume concludes with a brief advertisement for the next volume to be published.

"Flying to the Rescue" describes Ted Scott's attempts to locate an airship which has been disabled over the Atlantic. Airships were very much a part of aviation news at the time. The British airship R-100 had just flown from England to Toronto and back; incidentally the R-100 carried among its crew a young aircraft engineer and budding author by the name of Nevil Shute. Shute had been one of the Vickers team of designers and builders of the R-100. Earlier, in July of 1919, the English airship R-32 had flown to New Jersey from England. Additionally, the U.S. Navy was in the middle of an ambitious, but short-lived, Zeppelin-building program. In addition, the Graf Zeppelin had arrived in America in October of 1928.

In the Ted Scott version, Ted and Walter Hapworth fly to the rescue of the stranded airship with the help of new aircraft, a version of an autogyro, which combines the principles of a fixed-wing plane and a helicopter. The autogyro created a great sensation when it was developed at this time, but it never really saw extensive production, except in aviation adventure series books, that is, where numerous authors saw it as a wonderfully helpful aid to building imaginative plot sequences.

From 1931 on, only one Ted Scott book appears per year, the Syndicate apparently having decided to bring the series in line with its other series, such as the Hardy Boys and the Tom Swift books. Edward Stratemeyer's death in 1930 seems scarcely to have caused a ripple in Syndicate publishing schedules. That fact reflects credit on his system of management and organization.

The 1931 volume, "Danger Trails of the Sky," takes Ted to the Himalayas, where he provides assistance to the members of the American Exploration Society as they attempt to scale Mount Everest. The use of aircraft in helping mountain climbers make their assault on difficult peaks was increasing; the British pilot Alan Cobham had toyed with this concept briefly in 1928, and in 1932 a British team began what was eventually to be a successful attempt to fly over the top of Mount Everest in 1933. In Ted Scott's version, an unpleasant Tibetan prince by the name of Chang-Laong warns them not to participate, but Ted perseveres in spite of Chang-Laong's threat.

The 1932 title, "Following the Sun Shadow," accurately describes the plot of the book, as Ted Scott and Walter Hapworth agree to assist a team of scientists from Westland University who want to observe a solar eclipse from an aircraft flying at high altitude. Ted and Walter and their team find that they have aggressive competition from another team of scientists flown by

two antagonistic fliers named Laky and Sempter. There was a solar eclipse on August 31st of 1932, and it was photographed at high altitude from an aircraft by a team of Army photographers. The eclipse was visible on the North American continent in Eastern Canada, New Hampshire, and Maine. In the Ted Scott version, however, Ted and his cohorts travel to Africa to view the eclipse. Author B undoubtedly felt that an African setting provided more opportunities for exotic adventures than the area around Fryeburg, Maine, where a number of university teams had gathered. The account of the efforts of the Army team and their resulting photographs appeared in the November, 1932, issue of "National Geographic Magazine."

Laky and Sempter return to harass the efforts of Ted Scott and Walter Hapworth in the 1933 volume, "Battling the Wind." In this episode, Ted and Walter become involved in a race down the coast of South America to Cape Horn, the southernmost extremity of the continent. The difficult and unusual flying conditions they encounter may have been inspired by the accounts of the French airline responsible for flying the mail from South America to Africa and Europe. In addition, Antoine de Saint Exupery's best-selling novel about his experiences flying the mail from Patagonia to Buenos Aires, "Night Flight," had been published the previous year. The South American continent was in general becoming better known to North Americans largely as the result of increased air travel.

In "Brushing the Mountain Tops" (1934), author B sends Ted Scott to the wilderness of northern Arizona, where he helps another group of scientists as they research the lives of the Hopi Indians. This book, which employs the kidnapping of one of the scientist's young sons as its subplot, may have partly been inspired by the publicity surrounding the kidnapping of the Lindbergh baby in 1932 and the subsequent search for the kidnappers, which resulted in the arrest and trial of Bruno Hauptmann in 1934. There is also a possibility that the book was partly inspired by Aldous Huxley's 1932 novel, "Brave New World," which also contrasted aviation technology with the Indians of the American West.

The 1934 volume, "Castaways of the Stratosphere," is filled with signs of the increasing world tensions of the period, as Ted Scott helps members of a U. S. Army team recover stolen plans for a high altitude balloon. Morley Wick, full with fanatic hatred for Major Bradshaw, the key member of the team, is Ted's principal antagonist; Wick steals the plans and then sabotages a balloon flight, causing Ted to undertake an aerial search for the drifting balloon. The book contains an especially large number of technical descriptions, including accounts of the troposphere, cosmic rays, and balloon and gondola construction. The U. S. Army was deeply involved with high altitude balloon flights at the time. Part of the story is set in the area of the Black Hills of South Dakota, where a record-breaking ascent to a height of over 79,000 feet was made by an Army team on November 11th, 1935.

The final two volumes of the series, "Hunting the Sky Spies" (1941) and "The Pursuit Patrol" (1943), involve Ted Scott in events associated with the onset of World War II, but not in actual combat. In "Hunting the Sky Spies," Ted is involved in flight testing a new airplane near Detroit and then assists Canadian authorities in tracking down spies. At one point Ted flies a shore patrol, looking for submarines off the Canadian coast. In "The Pursuit Patrol," Ted chases some platinum pirates and becomes involved in the development of a new aircraft that is intended to be used as part of an aerial international police force whose mission is to help maintain world peace. "The Pursuit Patrol" concludes with an advertisement for a subsequent volume

entitled "Under Sealed Orders," but that volume was never published. Although the final two books of the series are as well written as the preceding volumes, the events of the world situation of the 1940s probably reduced reader interest in the 1930s type of aviation hero that Ted Scott personified. It seems likely that "Hunting the Sky Spies" was written late in 1940, and "The Pursuit Patrol" in 1941, before the United States entered the war. "Under Sealed Orders" was probably cancelled after America entered the war. At that point the audience was more interested in reading the Al Avery "Yankee Flier" books of the R. Sidney Bowen "Dave Dawson" books.

A number of pertinent observations result from this review of the Ted Scott books. Although they were initially intended as an opportunity to utilize spectacular aviation achievements as the basis for an ongoing series of boys books, the decision to incorporate a subplot involving non-flying events tended to produce mixed results, especially in the hands of the first series ghost writer, author A. Once author B became involved in the series, the quality of the books improved significantly, and once author B became the exclusive series writer, the books maintained a reasonably high quality of plot and characterization. Of the twenty series titles, about six were linked directly to specific aerial achievements, including the Lindbergh flight to Paris, the Byrd expedition to the South Pole, the Dole Race to Hawaii, and the Kingsford-Smith flight to Australia. The other books in the series described aerial adventures generally illustrating the kinds of activities that were actually occurring at the time. And if neither series author ever completely captured the authentic flavor of flying activity, they at least brought the experiences of flight a little closer to the average American youth who was eager to learn about them. And, as we have seen, the second author of the series, author B, deserves most of the credit for raising the Ted Scott series to its highest level of technical and literary achievement.

A Brief Summary of Technical Descriptions to be found in the Ted Scott Books

Over the Ocean to Paris (1927):

1. aerial maneuvers (pp. 42-3)
2. theory of flight (52-3)
3. description of aircraft (98-9; 166-7)
4. compass (185)

Rescued in the Clouds (1927):

1. floating airfield (118-22)

Over the Rockies with the Air Mail (1927):

1. mountain flying (60-1)

First Stop Honolulu (1927):

1. altitude records (6-7)
2. engine operation (120-1)

The Search for the Lost Flyers (1928):

1. airplane features (11-2)
2. army version of pilot inaptitude (41)
3. flying in the future (44-5)

South of the Rio Grande (1928):

1. aircraft improvements (10)

Across the Pacific (1928):

1. engine muffler (2-3)

The Lone Eagle of the Border (1929):

1. aircraft appearance (8-9)
2. flying in the future (94-5)

Flying Against Time (1929):

1. earth inductor compass (41-4)

Over the Jungle Trails (1929):

1. passenger aircraft (86-7)

Lost at the South Pole (1930):

1. aircraft preflight procedure (52)

Through the Air to Alaska (1930):

1. high altitude flying (55-6)
2. aircraft preflight procedure (116-7)

Flying to the Rescue (1930):

1. helicopters and future aircraft (2-5; 48-50)
2. characteristics of airships (32-5)

Danger Trails of the Sky (1931):

1. high altitude flight (47-51)

Following the Sun Shadow (1932):

1. path of solar eclipses (26-7)
2. artificial horizon instrument (63)
3. aircraft description (62-4)

Battling the Wind (1933):

1. aircraft preflight procedure (26-7)

Brushing the Mountain Top (1934):

1. autopilots (7-8)
2. radio sets (90-1)

Castaways of the Stratosphere (1935):

1. troposphere (33-4)
2. balloon construction (46-7)
3. gondola construction (68-70)
4. cosmic rays (93-4)
5. aircraft preflight procedure (112-3)

Hunting the Sky Spies (1941)**The Pursuit Uatrol (1943)**

HORATIO ALGER, JR., CREATOR OF AMERICAN FOLKLORE

By Stanley Pachon

Over the years a large number of critics have been downgrading, often ridiculing the works of Horatio Alger, Jr. They complained about the stereotyped characters and the improbable and unrealistic plots, etc., etc., ad nauseum. Such critics were possibly disgruntled writers who never had their names on the cover of a book. Such superficial analyses by such has no merit or value.

When Professor B. A. Botkin was assembling material for his forthcoming book which was published in 1944 under the title, "Treasury of American Folklore," he selected items from two of Alger's books as worthy for inclusion in his book as well as giving the characters selected as part of American folklore.

In his book in chapter two under the chapter heading, "Pseudo Bad Men," the character from Joe's Luck; or, A Boy's Adventures in California (1877) was introduced. To give a brief synopsis of the incident, Joe Mason, the hero of the story with a companion from New England who proudly gives his name as "Joshua Bickford from Pumpkin Hollow, State of Maine" are on the way to the gold mines when they meet this "bad man" who introduces him-

self thusly, "I'm from Pike County, Missouri, I kin whip my weight in wild cats, am a match for a dozen Indians to onct, and can tackle a lion without flinchin'". "I'm a rip-tail roarer I am. I always kill a man who insults me!" Needless to say Joe and his companion soon discover that this is all bluff and brag and are not impressed with his wild stories of his own heroics. He plays a mean trick on Joe and his companion substituting his own sorry nag for Joshua Bickford's horse as well as taking all their food supplies. The two make it to the mines and the "bad man" drifts in while the two are there. He is exposed and the miners want to lynch him but Joe out of pity intercedes in his behalf and Joshua Bickford suggests that since he reclaimed his own horse a more fitting punishment would be to tie the "bad man" backwards on his horse with a days supply of food and send him adrift. The miners accept this solution with a great deal of hilarity and set him adrift. The "bad man" finally drifts into San Francisco where he tries his old trick of Bad Man's Bluff in Joe's restaurant, but he is again unmasked and Joe finally convinces him to give up his masquerade.

Prof. Botkin also reached into Alger's Abraham Lincoln, the Backwoods Boy (1883) for material. Under Chapter 6 of his book under the heading "Patron Saints" he uses some excerpts from Alger's book about "Honest Abe."

Prof. Botkin's credentials and reputation in his chosen field of Folklore and Folksong are very impressive. He had been a professor at the University of Oklahoma for a good number of years. He was on the Federal writers project as a national folklore editor. He was a resident fellow in folklore at the Library of Congress. Later he became chief of Archives of American Folksong and many other positions.

He received many awards and honors for his work in American Folklore. He authored and edited over 25 volumes in the area of folksong and folklore, as well as contributing to various encyclopedias and magazines and much more.

Professor Botkin could have selected from hundreds of other writers in place of Alger, but he deemed Alger's works impressive and worthy enough to be included in his book. His selection was based upon the originality and creativity of the author's work. No higher praise or honor could come to Alger than that.

Incidentally Alger's work has also been included in the monumental, over 1200 pages, book, "A Bibliography of North American Folklore and Folksong" compiled by Charles Haywood and published in 1951 by Greenburg.

NEW MEMBERS

- 301. Anne E. Tracy, 526 Lathrop, Lansing, Mich. 48912
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- Charles P. Fisk, W1854 Bridge St., Spokane, Wash. 99201

LETTERS

Dear Eddie,

I found the "Friendly Reminder" slip at just the time when I was about to teach my Mass Media class about the place in history of the Dime Novel.

It is my theory that the Dime Novel helped to solve the problem of illiteracy in this country and England in the last century. The Dime Novel was the popular literature of its day and the young people wanted to read these exciting books. So to share the Dime Novels experience with their friends they learned to read.

In our era where TV and radio supply the popular entertainment it is not necessary to learn to read so a large part of our population is not motivated to become literate. I believe that the Dime Novel and 19th century and early 20th century literacy go hand-in-hand.

The Round-up continues to be an informative and entertaining respite in my life.

Sincerely, Steve Press

Dear Ed,

It amazes me, each month, how you keep on coming up with such interesting articles with each issue. I was particularly interested in your June 1986 issue containing the wonderfully long article on "THE PENNY BLOODS" by W. O. G. LOFTS. My compliments to Mr. Loft on a truly fine piece of work.

I have a copy of a book, first printed in England in 1978 and in the U.S. in 1979 entitled 'THE SHILLING SHOCKERS' Stories of Terror from the Gothic Blubooks edited by Peter Haining. I was surprised at Mr. Loft's statement of the lack of interest in this type of stories. I enjoyed them tremendously.

Your friend, Andy Biegel, Jr.

RECENT ARTICLES CONCERNING DIME NOVELS, SERIES BOOKS, Etc.

NANCY DREW, YUPPIE DETECTIVE, by Nancy Wartik. Illustrated article appearing in September 1986 issue of MS Magazine. (Sent in by Jim Deutsch)

THE CASE OF THE UPDATED DETECTIVE, by Nanci Hellmich. Illustrated article in the July 24, 1986 issue of USA Today. Both articles dwell upon the modernization of the Nancy Drew stories. (Sent in by Stanley Pachon)

A DIME NOVEL COLLECTOR'S BOOKSHELF

THE DEADLY DUTCHMAN, by John Blaine. A reprinting of this practically unavailable (until now) Rick Brant story. Published by the Mystery and Adventure Series Review, P. O. Box 3488, Tucson, Ariz. 85722. This is well worth acquiring for all Rick Brant collectors, even if you should be lucky enough to have a copy of the original.

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1927; Nov. 8, 1927; Mar. 8, 1928; Mar. 22, 1928; June 22, 1928; July
8, 1928; Sept. 8, 1928; Sept. 22, 1928

Fame and Fortune

Nov. 15, 1928; Dec. 15, 1928; Feb. 1, 1929; April 15, 1929

Fortune

July 19, 1929

Top Notch Semi-Monthly

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